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IT WOULD HAVE BEEN a bold prophet who even a few months ago would have ventured to predict that before the summer was over we would be regulating industry in the United States by martial law. Yet that is the situation today in Oklahoma and Texas. In the former state there has been virtually a complete shutdown of the oil wells since Governor Murray called out the troops. On August 12 the Texas Legislature rushed through an act to restrict oil production in Texas, and before a week was out Governor Sterling had troops in the East Texas oil fields. This at present is the most important oil field in the United States; it has recently been producing more than 700,000 barrels of oil a day. Now under the order of the Texas Railroad Commission this will be cut down for the time being to less than 300,000 barrels a day, a restriction which may greatly affect the price of crude oil. Thus, confronted with a collapse in oil prices, individual States are putting into effect dramatically and drastically proration measures that the Federal Government might long ago have worked out in a milder and more orderly form.

THE INDISCRETIONS of the wayward assistant secretaries in Washington are really becoming appalling. Apparently they have little loyalty either to the philosophy or the policies of the Hoover Administration. There is, for example, the statement of Ferry K. Heath, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in Charge of Public Buildings, in which he declares that the Treasury has had enough of hiring private architects to design public works. Why? Because the past year's experience has proved that the government's own architects are better. In order to speed the President's emergency building program, Mr. Heath explains, the Treasury let out a large number of designing contracts which otherwise would have been handled by the government staff. For some inexplicable reason, the private firms could not compete in speed and efficiency with the government's own construction. Now this may all be true, but how does it look for an undersecretary to confute in the public prints the President's confirmed belief that private agencies are invariably preferable for such work—provided they are given adequate remuneration? Were Mr. Heath alone in his misbehavior, it might be dismissed as an inadvertence. But there is also the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, R. W. Dunlap, who has been justifying wage cuts in private industry—in a speech which he delivered only a few days after President Hoover had repudiated Secretary Lamont for his letter to the same effect. We are all for getting to the bottom of this reprehensible insubordination and commend these instances to the Republican National Committee as evidence of another conspiracy to discredit the Administration.

ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE we publish a letter written by a worker at Boulder Dam, where fourteen hundred men are now on strike. That this letter in no way exaggerates the conditions of work and life there is indicated by the press dispatches and official statements that have appeared in the few days since it was written. While Secretary Doak and other members of Mr. Hoover's cabinet have been asserting frequently and belligerently that there must be no reduction of wages, the Six Companies, Inc., in charge of the work at Boulder Dam under government contract, recently reduced the wages of shovellers from five dollars to four dollars a day. The workers contend that heat prostrations have caused thirteen deaths, and that medical aid is practically not obtainable. Official figures show that a maximum average temperature of 120 degrees has prevailed at the dam during the past month. The men made idle when work was recently suspended at the dam, according to Associated Press dispatches dated August 12, faced hunger within a few days unless construction was resumed. Officials at Las Vegas say they will be unable to feed these men when the town's scanty funds are exhausted. On August 11 two hundred striking workmen were ordered from the government reservation embracing the Hoover Dam site and Boulder City, and were compelled to move their camp five miles west of the city into the desert hills. Such is civilization in America's New Mexico in 1931.

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT labor trials in American history, ranking, some believe, with the trials of the Molly Maguires of Pennsylvania and the Chicago anarchists, opened on August 17 in the usually quiet little court-house in Harlan, Kentucky. Twenty-eight men, most of them former members of the United Mine Workers of

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America, are charged with first-degree murder as the result of the killing of a mine guard. In Kentucky the penalty for murder is death. According to lawyers and others who have interested themselves in the case, the real crime of the defendants lies in the fact that they had attempted to organize a local of the United Mine Workers. Their efforts were followed by several days of guerilla warfare between miners and company guards, during which four persons were killed. Thus far the United Mine Workers have refused to come to the aid of their members who are on trial, the defense being left instead to other and more radical organizations. As a further result of the desertion of these men by the U. M. W. A., says the Federated Press, both the Industrial Workers of the World and the National Miners' Union are making deep inroads among the miners of the Kentucky fields. Some sixty to seventy other persons are under arrest in Harlan, charged with criminal syndicalism and similarly grave offenses. They include a clergyman who had spoken sympathetically of the hungry miners, the chief of police of Evarts, Kentucky, and two investigators for the American Civil Liberties Union. The latter two, Arnold Johnson and Mrs. Jessie Wakefield, were recently arrested after several attempts had been made to intimidate them into leaving Kentucky.

THE CHORUS OF PROTEST against the proposal to increase railroad freight rates has been growing daily. Representatives of seven large industries, who appeared before the Interstate Commerce Commission, declared the bulk of their shipments would have to be diverted to motor trucks if the requested increase were granted. The utilities commissions of South and North Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas demanded immediate dismissal of the railroads' petition on the ground that the Interstate Commerce Commission was without authority to raise rates "on the mere showing of a financial emergency." The National Grange, representing 800,000 farmers, joined in this demand. Governors Ely of Massachusetts and Cross of Connecticut have sent representatives to Washington to argue that a rate increase at this time would prove "a serious handicap to New England business." On the other hand, the Railway Brotherhoods, though they first took a neutral stand, have finally declared themselves in favor of an increase. Their joint statement said nothing about wages, but their gesture was doubtless based on the very real fear that wages will be cut if the railroads' petition is denied. Should this occur the Brotherhoods must either meekly accept the wage reduction, which they have been vigorously fighting for several months, or else bring the country face to face with a nationwide strike. Thus to all appearances the Interstate Commerce Commission must decide whether it wishes to take a chance of hampering business still further by approving the requested increase, or whether it prefers to risk a railway strike by refusing its approval.

GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT of New York has called an extra session of the Legislature as a result of a decision of the highest court of his State that the resolution of last winter empowering the Hofstadter investigating committee to conduct an inquiry into the official conduct of the city of New York was limited by the failure of the Governor to sign that resolution. In order that the Committee shall have the right to grant immunity to all witnesses called before it this procedure must be followed now. As a result there is much fluttering of the political dovecotes, the proceeding being judged purely from the point of view of the Governor's presidential candidacy, when it was only a simple duty which any Executive would have performed unless he wished to hamper the ability of a legislative committee to achieve the ends for which it was created. Some say that this will help the Governor's presidential boom by showing his independence of Tammany; others that it will cost him Tammany's precious support after the first ballot in the presidential convention. As between the two, it would be far better tactics for the Governor to oppose Tammany than to seem to be its ally or protegee. But we are sure that the Governor considered neither matter, but only his plain duty. There was really no alternative for an honest Executive.

AGAIN SENATOR BORAH has said the needed word. In an address at Boise, Idaho, to the Service Clubs, he frankly declared that the French idea of security "carried beyond its present limits," "can mean nothing less than the destruction of Germany, Austria and Hungary, and that the world will not consent to see brought about." The Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations pointed out that France "is protected by every conceivable form of guarantee." It is a member of the League of Nations. Under the Locarno Pact, England has pledged itself to go to France's aid if Germany attacks and Germany itself has signed a hundred-year pledge of peace with France. More than that, as Senator Borah pointed out, France has what practically amounts to military alliances with Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, Poland, Roumania, and Bulgaria; her army numbers 560,000 to Germany's 95,000, and the latter is without guns, tanks or airplanes. France is strong and rich while Germany, Hungary, and Austria are down and out—on the verge of ruin. And still France maintains that she is in danger, and that she cannot and will not disarm until everybody else, especially the United States, guarantees her safety! Have the French really lost their courage and been conquered by craven fear? Are they convinced that the Germans are such supermen that unarmed they menace France? Or are they merely the victims of their conscienceless and scheming politicians who keep up the fear of Germany for their selfish and nationalistic ends?

GANDHI'S REFUSAL finally to go to the London Round-table Conference on India we profoundly regret. Not that we have any defence for the failure of the Government of India to live up to its obligations if, as the Indians insist, it has violated the solemn truce entered into with the Nationalist Congress. But when such vast issues are at stake we cannot see why one additional injustice could not be borne a few months longer—perhaps to be rectified. The Round-table without Gandhi will be no Round-table at all. Indeed, we cannot see how it can be held without him, and we shall hope that Ghandi will yet reconsider and go. It is most regrettable that the rigidity of English officialdom could not have been softened to the extent of allowing Lord Irwin to remain as Viceroy a few months after the expiration of his term. Had he been there in place of Lord Willingdon this break would hardly have

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occurred. Meanwhile it is interesting to note that the English speaker on India at the Institute of Politics at Williamstown, like his predecessor last year, blamed the United States for all of England's woes in India. If only the United States were not pro-Indian and anti-British, said he, India would still be contentedly at England's heel! With mentalities like that loose in the world it is no wonder that Great Britain is in straits with her overseas subjects.

"IF PREACHING SERMONS about the needs of the poor and offering prayers for the under-privileged classes constitute socialism, I'll have to plead guilty"—thus the Rev. A. Lawrence Berry, who has just been ousted from his first pulpit, at West Brook, Connecticut, for "radicalism." Graduated from the Yale Divinity School in June, Mr. Berry soon discovered that his Congregationalist employers did not come to church to hear about the "downtrodden masses" or of the "oppression of the poor by the rich and the afflictions brought upon the country by the millionaires." The idea! Why could he not have known that people go to church to be soothed and not to be stirred, so that they may go ahead comfortably in their own righteousness, in their duty well done, and not be vexed on the Sabbath by being told about the bad plight of others or to hear the rich denounced as malefactors. Couldn't Mr. Berry have realized that most of the churches of today are like this? That members no more wish to be ill at ease than did their prototypes when the Upstart of Galilee began to make good people uncomfortable? We suggest that Congressman Fish call his committee together at once to investigate this case and see just how many young radicals like this are being turned out of the Yale Divinity School. Pray how could this school have come into being—and how could Yale University survive—were it not for the rich, the godly, and the church-going?

OUT OF PERHAPS 300,000 manuscripts and foreign books submitted to American publishers every year, according to John Macrae, Jr., of the publishing firm of E. P. Dutton and Company, only about 10,000 are published. And out of those 10,000 only about one in fifty survives more than two years. One may draw whatever moral from this one pleases. Considering the appallingly low quality of the average book that is actually published, it leaves one to speculate, on the assumption that the judgment of publishers is reasonably good, on how unspeakably bad must be the average manuscript. And that only one in fifty of the published books reveals any survival powers may indicate statistically how bad are the other forty-nine books—or it may indicate something about readers. After all, even one in fifty means two hundred more books a year added to the cultural load on posterity's back; posterity must keep jettisoning and forgetting the poorest in sheer self-defense. Thus even if the average quality of the books were two or ten times as high as it is, we should have to get rid of all but the best. Mr. Macrae announces that his own firm is going to try the experiment of republishing books that have already been out five years or more and for which a quiet demand still exists. It is a good experiment. Why should we have to read new and mediocre biographies of Voltaire, Goethe, Beethoven, Lincoln, and Napoleon every year, for example, when better old biographies exist?

Cuba Revolts Again

PERHAPS never in modern history was there a country so sorely in need of a wise and sound revolution as is Cuba today. Its people are hungry, its domestic economy is near the breaking point. But more significant than these, it is saddled with an absolutely ruthless dictatorship, with the iron and bloody rule of a personally ambitious man, which, more than anything else, has brought Cuba to its present miserable estate, for General Gerardo Machado y Morales has been complete dictator. With the help of his well-fed army, of which he now boasts while the peasants starve, he managed for years to suppress all military and revolutionary opposition. Through his control of the police he stamped out labor and liberal opposition; the murder of more than one labor leader and liberal editor has been traced directly to the doorstep of his police administration. By skilful manipulation of the state lottery he kept the politicians silent and the three political parties unanimously obedient to his every whim and wish; they rewrote the constitution at his command and reelected him to office despite his pledge that he would not seek a second term. These things Machado could not have done without financial assistance, and to obtain that very necessary help he, the chief of a supposedly independent state, more than once degraded himself to the point of licking the boots of New York bankers. Some of them responded with American dollars, more than a billion of which are now "invested" in Cuba. In consequence a few American bankers and investors have at times profited, the Machado dictatorship has waxed fat, while poverty was slowly spreading among the Cuban people.

It is this tremendous poverty, due in large part to the sugar situation, which has led to the present attempt to overthrow Machado's dictatorial rule. If the Menocal-Mendieta insurrection fails, because of the capture of its leaders or for some other reason, it is almost certain there will be other uprisings in the future, for the Cuban situation will remain intolerable until Machado is deposed. We earnestly wish that Cuba could have a genuine revolution. We no less than the Cuban National Confederation of Labor want to see a real democracy established there. But, unhappily, the weakness of the labor and liberal movements strongly suggests that the time has not yet come for a lasting democratic revolution. For the time being at least the insurrections will be led by military men. Hence the presidency will doubtless fall, should Machado be gotten rid of, to a political general, or some one like General Mario Menocal. We certainly cannot be counted among those who believe in government by political generals, but we nevertheless feel that any new government in Cuba could only be a distinct improvement over the harsh rule of Machado. This would have been especially true of former President Menocal, if we may judge by his past record and by the present program of his party, but fate was against him.

But while studying the developments in Cuba, it is important to bear in mind that the news from Washington also needs watching. Already there is talk of intervention. Senator Walsh of Massachusetts has demanded that the United States "order" the Cubans "to put their house in order and conduct their government decently, honestly and

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fairly." Other persons are discussing our "obligations" under the Platt Amendment, and still others are pointing to the precedents for armed intervention established by Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson. The State Department has denied that it is thinking in terms of intervention. So far so good. But we wish the Department would declare flatly and unequivocally that the United States will not intervene. It should make it clear to the people of this country that the rebellion against Machado is purely and simply a domestic affair of the Cubans. Washington is here not merely concerned with the question of justice for a small nation, which in itself should be sufficient to persuade the United States to keep its military forces out of Cuba, but with the friendship of all the rest of Latin America. Mr. Hoover has shown upon several occasions that he counts upon this friendship to improve trade relations with our neighbors to the south. Armed intervention in Nicaragua four years ago aroused the whole of Central and South America against us. Any suspicion that we are even as much as contemplating similar action in Cuba may bring another and perhaps a worse storm. The State Department should make its position clear. It should declare that it will not intervene in any revolt of the Cubans against their monstrous dictator.

Destroy and Prosper

THE United States Department of Agriculture has estimated that the 1931 cotton crop will reach 15,584,000 bales, 1,652,000 bales larger than the 1930 crop, and about 1,500,000 bales larger than the average of previous private estimates. Cotton has collapsed to around 7 cents a pound, the lowest price in the last twenty-five years, and the Federal Farm Board has made the amazing proposal to the Governors of fourteen cotton-producing States that they "induce immediate plowing under of every third row of cotton now growing." Fortunately, at least half of the Governors to whom the Farm Board telegraphed had the courage and good sense to reject its proposal instantly.

That it would have been possible to carry out such a plan even with the maximum of official cooperation and pressure is extremely doubtful. For the plan to succeed as the Farm Board intends, it would be necessary not only for each State voluntarily to destroy the same proportional amount of cotton as all the others, but for each individual cotton planter to do so. It is doubtful if such a plan could be carried out even by martial law. For just as it is to each individual State's interest to secure a maximum production of cotton itself and have all the rest cut down, so it is to each individual planter's interest to secure a maximum production while every *other* planter plows under part of his yield.

Even conceding that it were possible to put such a plan into effect it would be little short of criminal. This does not mean that the members of the Farm Board who suggested the plan had themselves any criminal intent; they are merely well-intentioned men whose economic beliefs are simple, naive, and tragically muddle-headed. Why is cotton down? Because there is an over-supply. Therefore we need simply destroy the surplus, and everything will be well. That is the essence of the Farm Board's economics. But if it works for cotton, it should work for everything else. It is not merely cotton that is down, but nearly all basic agricultural staples and raw materials. Wheat, copper, silver, oil, rubber, coffee, sugar are all at prices lower than the world has seen in years. Therefore let the nations of the world take hundreds of millions of bushels of wheat, thousands of tons of sugar, rubber, and copper, and millions of barrels of oil and dump them all into the sea. Then prices will go up, prosperity will return with a rush, we shall all be jubilant and a Republican victory will be assured.

Surely even the Farm Board might begin to suspect a slight flaw in this logic. Even Mr. Hoover, who through his silence had given at least his tacit approval to the Farm Board's suggestion, might begin to suspect it. Indeed, when he was Secretary of Commerce, and when it was *other* countries that were carrying out analogous schemes, Mr. Hoover saw the flaw very clearly. No one was more eloquent than he in exposing the iniquity of the Stevenson rubber restriction plan carried out under the aegis of Great Britain; no one objected more strenuously than he to the coffee valorization plan of Brazil. No one would be more prompt now to condemn any other nation which deliberately sought to destroy a part of some basic commodity that we import. Indeed, it is almost safe to say that if any other group of producers in the country were to enter into an agreement now that each member of the group should deliberately destroy a proportional part of his stocks, Mr. Hoover's Department of Justice would instantly prosecute such a group for a flagrant violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.

Overlooking individuals, what lies behind the suggestion of the Farm Board, as we have said, is the naive and appallingly widespread belief that the present world crisis is the result of a general "over-production." That this belief should exist in a period when there is probably more want and distress in the world than in a generation is amazing. Are the American people, who are at least better off on the whole than any other, too-well clothed, too-well fed, too-well housed? The question answers itself. The present crisis is the result, not of a general overproduction, but ultimately of an unbalanced production, and more immediately of a collapse in demand, a collapse in purchasing power, a collapse in methods of distribution. The way out is not to destroy supply, but to restore demand. Two moves in that direction would help the cotton growers immediately, as they would help every other producer: the restoration of the chief sore spot, Germany, to economic health, and the reduction of tariffs, particularly our own. Only by selling us imports can foreign nations secure the purchasing power to take our exports.

Meanwhile we may regard the immediate situation in cotton more calmly. A 15,584,000 bale cotton crop would be large, but it would not be record-breaking: there were larger crops in 1925 and 1926, when cotton was at a much higher level. It is true that we have a record-breaking carry-over, but that again is the result of collapsed demand, not of record-breaking crops. The Government's August cotton crop estimates, moreover, have been badly mistaken in the past, and can be again. Perhaps the weather and the boll-weevil between them will do more to reduce the crop in the next few months than the Farm Board and all the Southern Governors could possibly do.

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Mr. Hoover Wobbles on the Dole

THE President begins to weaken in his attitude toward unemployment relief—of that there can be no doubt. Almost immediately following Senator Couzens's demand for an immediate extra session of Congress and Federal aid for the starving, Senator Fess, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, announced, after a long interview with the President, that Mr. Hoover would have a "concrete program for relief of the unemployment situation when Congress meets." The President, it appears, is making "a most thorough study of the unemployment situation" (*another* study!); he has "set all agencies of the government at work to ascertain the actual situation," and "within a month" will know "exactly what will be required of the government next winter,"—this a week after his announcing that the Government's function could only be that of a coordinator of all relief agencies. Both the President and Senator Fess are still opposed to an extra session, but the Federal Government "must and will" take decisive steps to prevent starvation next winter. Indeed, the Senator opines that, with the prospect of a vast over-supply of foodstuffs next winter, it would be "unthinkable" for the Government to stand idly by while hundreds of thousands starved.

Precisely. That is exactly what the many individuals, organizations, and journals with *The Nation's* point of view on this question, have been saying for months past. Now that Mr. Hoover has come to this position there can be little doubt that if he really obtains and faces the facts, he will see that there will be no possibility of succoring the needy except by grants from the Federal Treasury. We are aware that both he and Mr. Fess are still "unalterably opposed" to the dole—but then he was always unalterably opposed to anything like a moratorium to Europe; it is never astonishing in a Presidential year to find a candidate altering "unalterably opposed" into "alterably opposed." What are two letters of the alphabet to a politician? We have read, too, of Mr. Hoover's rejoicing because the directors of 227 community chests or councils have reported to Washington their "complete confidence" that they will be able "wholly" to undertake the burden of local relief. Before we can share Mr. Hoover's happiness we should like to know something about these 227 communities. Are they large or small? Upon what do they base their "complete confidence"? What does the word "wholly" mean? And how can they tell now what will be the unemployment in their communities in December? Mr. Hoover admits it is worse.

We are the less impressed by the report of the 227 community chests because there lies before us the June Relief Bulletin of the Russell Sage Foundation. "Outdoor relief expenditures in the larger cities," it reads, "which rose to an unprecedented height at the end of the past winter and declined in both April and May, underwent further decline in June. In part the reduction has been due to normal seasonal contraction of relief operations, but there is evidence that *depletion of special emergency funds* accounts for much of the decline." Mr. Hoover is trusting, indeed, if he believes that private charity will everywhere be able to repeat next winter what it did last, and then be able to add sufficient to carry all the additional unemployed. Take Chicago and Philadelphia, for example. In June, available relief expenditures were less than one-third of those in May, and *less than one-fifth of those in March*. Will any sane person contend that there was only one-fifth of the suffering in July that there was in March?

We have deliberately used the phrase in regard to Mr. Hoover "if he faces the facts," because he is steadily refusing to do so. How else can one view his giving to the Washington correspondents with his own hands the absolutely misleading statement issued by Secretary Doak on August 4? As he handed it out Mr. Hoover declared that the reorganized Federal Employment Service "shows a large measure of accomplishment." The headlines the next day announced that a total of 638,689 people had been provided with jobs by the Government "cooperative employment service." The correspondents were amazed by this great success—until they came to analyze it. Then what did they find? Why, that the Federal Employment Service had placed only 281,769 persons in jobs between April 1 and July 31, and that of those placed in jobs probably 95 per cent were farm laborers! More than that, the President and his worthy Secretary of Labor forgot to add that in the same period of 1928, when there was no crisis, the Federal Employment Service placed no less than 559,000 farm workers, or at least 250,000 more! Moreover it now appears that despite this 1931 record employment was off two per cent in July and wages 4.8 per cent from June.

But this was only part of the flim-flam worked upon the correspondents by the President. A further examination of the facts shows that the "cooperative employment service," credit for whose work Mr. Hoover and Mr. Doak annex so glibly, consists of the employment agencies of the several States, many of them long established, which would have functioned even if the Federal Government had never moved. Now, the only connection between the Federal Government and these agencies which lends a shadow of justification to Mr. Hoover's claim of a federal achievement, is the fact that a number of "State directors," chiefly jobless labor friends of Mr. Doak, have been constituted liaison officers, without even an office force to enable them to achieve something. They are today doing nothing but getting in the way of State officials, patting them on the back if the spirit moves, and forwarding information to the Department of Labor. On the basis of these tenuous performances and the arduous effort involved in totalling up the achievements of the States, the President actually tried to assume at least partial credit for the 356,920 persons whose jobs are *entirely* due to the States. Was there ever such colossal impudence?

We believe that the President's wobbling and shuffling will go on until he finally takes the only possible course to keep numbers of American citizens from utter starvation. It is quite significant that Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania demanded in Detroit on August 13, that there be immediate planning "for relief by the only agency that can complete the job, and that is Uncle Sam." Americans shall not die for lack of food in the midst of plenty.

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Speaking of Revolution . . .

By HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON

MONSIEUR ETIENNE DE SILHOUETTE had a bright idea. He would coin a new phrase and fashionable society would take it up and all would be well with the world.

Monsieur Etienne de Silhouette was in a very difficult position. Fashionable society had called upon him in its hour of need. Fashionable society was going broke. It was going broke so fast and so thoroughly that fashionable society had noticed it, and when fashionable society notices anything at all, it is time for the world to sit up and take notice.

The world sat up and took notice while Monsieur Etienne de Silhouette put on his best pair of blue clocked silk stockings to give notice to His Majesty the King that he was willing to accept the dignity which His Majesty's mistress had so kindly bestowed upon him.

When he drove back to Paris, a great sigh of relief went up among the card-tables of Versailles and snuff-boxes moved gaily from hand to hand. Pompadour was almost civil to France. (What sublime gall! "France, come here! France, bring me my knitting!" and the descendant of Holy Louis actually ran and fetched!) And everybody was happy.

Except Monsieur de Silhouette. For he was a stern man and an honest man, but he had no sense of humor and so he had believed what the King and the Pompadour had told him—that it was up to him to save the French Monarchy from bankruptcy.

Silhouette, a Ledger on Legs, studied the budget of the Kingdom as he had studied the returns of his subordinates when he was collector of internal revenue. He quickly detected the leak and reported to His Majesty that he knew the remedy. His Majesty bade him go ahead.

Silhouette went ahead. If the country was to be thrifty, why not begin right at home? And why not teach thrift to the little playmates of His Majesty, who could afford it better than the peasantry on their estates?

A new slogan was invented: "It is smart to be thrifty." A new law was passed, cutting all royal pensions in half, and another law threatening to tax the land of the nobility. Then, as a final gesture of thrift, "Would their Royal Highnesses and their Serene Highnesses and their just plain, ordinary Highnesses kindly sell their extra plate to help the State get a little cash?"

It was the greatest joke ever perpetrated upon the French people. Thriving through thrift! The country went Silhouette-mad. People gave Silhouette dinners where they served nothing but dry bread and drier water. The black and white artists who patronized the country fairs and who would cut you a "spitting image" of yourself for one hundredth the price of an oil painting, called their cheap little portraits Silhouette pictures. "Don't forget, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is smart to be thrifty! Have your thrift picture taken! Have your Silhouette picture taken!"

Silhouette, the honest but dumb financier, who thought he could save his nation by preaching that thrift like charity began in the parlor, lasted exactly eight months. Then he was allowed to retire to his country-place, where he spent the remaining few years of his life going to mass and writing a number of very dull volumes on subjects of a vaguely philosophical nature.

But seventy years after his death he enjoyed a short moment of posthumous glory. The covers of the Dictionary of the Academy were opened wide to receive a distinguished newcomer. The word "silhouette" was officially admitted as an active member of the French language. It meant "the portrait of a person in profile, showing only the outline!"

So much for the first great hero of smartish thrift and thrifty smartness. If you ever drive through Brie-sur-Marne, you may still see where he lies buried. But you won't notice any monument.

There exists an amiable notion that history teaches nothing and that therefore the hours spent upon historical studies are so much waste of time. Or as Henry of Dearborn expressed himself so eloquently, "History is bunk." He was right, but he might just as well have argued that the tables of multiplication teach nothing. It merely depends on how you use them. Perhaps history teaches too much.

The financial wonder-man of Louis XV has been completely overlooked by the biography-distillers of the last decade. Surely he deserved the obligatory 350 pages (frontispiece and twelve illustrations, $3 net) and he deserved them a great deal more than many of the other recipients of these post-sepulchral honors. For he was one of the most illuminating object lessons of the recent past. He honestly tried to save France by a thrift-campaign among the wealthier classes. They in turn called him a parsimonious prig and a muddle-headed meddler and hired every cartoonist in Paris to lampoon their enemy out of existence. Then they went back to their little dinner-parties and to their beloved backgammon.

Backgammon remained all the rage. Some of His Majesty's attendants by the next reign got to be quite good at the game. It is a pity that the most brilliant party was never finished. Just before the last throw of the dice, the players had their heads cut off.

Monsieur Sanson tried to finish it with his assistant. But the boy was nervous and upset the table. He tried to excuse himself. "Sh," said the amiable executioner. "I know all about it. We had a very busy and tiring day."

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President Hoover's Record

X. Hoover as Individualist

By WILLIAM HARD

MR. HOOVER entered the Presidency as a professed economic individualist—amid widespread approval and applause. In the circumstances created—or, rather, revealed—by the depression he has declined to proceed to any deliberate drastic open revision of his individualistic philosophy. He is charged now with lack of leadership. His dilemma is—and, indeed, long has been—that the only practicable, the only thinkable, leadership seems to be in the collectivist direction.

He shares this dilemma with most of the rest of our statesmen. Senator Borah, for instance, denounces "bureaus." He denounces the inevitable organs of the apparently irresistible collectivist advance. He denounces them; and from time to time in the Senate he reluctantly but repeatedly votes to bring some more of them into existence. He illustrates vividly our basic contemporary American paradox.

We are individualistic in thought, ingrowingly. We are collectivistic in action, expandingly.

I am obliged to look upon this paradox as forgivable. I am not unconscious of having myself contributed some few small notes to the alarms that have been rung against bureaucracy, while simultaneously contributing some few small bricks to the building of the bureaucratic edifice. I am unable (though it would be pleasant) to view the behavior of Mr. Borah and of Mr. Hoover in this matter with superciliousness.

It is only in association with the circumstances of the depression that I have begun belatedly to reflect that there must be a frailty somewhere in a philosophic system which expresses itself continuously toward one end in aspirational oratory and continuously toward the precisely opposite end in ultimate achieved conduct. Not being in public office, I can indulge myself in such reflections with a superior immunity.

Mr. Hoover's individualistic thesis is that there should be a recoil from governmentalism, and especially from federal governmentalism, and—more generally—from all collectivism sustained by governmentalism.

Let us observe that recoil in action.

An aggravated and extremely expensive instance of federal governmentalism has long existed in our federal subsidies to local highways and to local waterways.

Mr. Hoover, in his first regular report to the Congress on the state of the Union, in 1929, recommended a serious consideration of the advisability of enlarging the subsidies to local highways. He simultaneously recommended outrightly an enlargement of the subsidies to local waterways.

The railroads were naturally resentful. Better highways mean more trucks and buses, and better waterways mean more tugs and barges. The railroads relied on the incessant singing of the individualistic theme-song: "The Government should not compete—or facilitate competition—with its citizens and tax-payers." They relied in vain. The Administration has steadily pursued an advocacy of increasing federal assistance to highway and waterway developments.

Helpful to trucks and buses and to tugs and barges, the Administration has been even more directly helpful to airplanes and to ocean-ships. The federal subsidies to airplane development are accomplished through frank overpayments for the carriage of the mails. The subsidies to ocean-ship development are accomplished both by that method and by the method of construction-loans out of the Federal Treasury at non-commercially low rates of interest. Mr. Hoover has not striven to curtail these subsidies. He has striven—and successfully—to expand them.

Nor has he hesitated to invent at least two new species of federal subsidy.

He has advocated appropriations by the Federal Government for assistance to local county health units through the United States Public Health Service.

He has offered to deprive the Federal Treasury, during this current fiscal year, and during the next ensuing fiscal year, and (in part) during nine fiscal years thereafter, of some $250,000,000 due to it from European Governments in order, as he has said, "to help free the recuperative forces already in motion in the United States from retarding influences from abroad." The "retarding influence" instantly imminent was the potential incapacity of Germany to meet its obligations to American investors and depositors in German governmental and industrial and financial institutions. The "Hoover Moratorium" had its internationalistic aroma. It also had its economic anatomy. In that latter aspect it was nothing but an indirect preventive federal subsidy to the foreign-investment element in our population.

So much for subsidies. Now for regulation.

How many regulatory "fetters" have been struck from the limbs of the American business community under Mr. Hoover? Of course, none. The Republican Party must be credited with one stupendous betrayal of our Chambers of Commerce. It orates to them every four years against "bureaus"—and then, in office, rivets a few more bureaus upon them.

Under Mr. Hoover the perfectly permanent character of the bureau for the allocating and policing of the waves of the ether has become assured. Whatever dreams Mr. Hoover may have had, as Secretary of Commerce, of a "self-governing radio industry" have been dissipated in presidential awakening. The Federal Radio Commission is now an accepted fixture in our federal bureaucratic display.

We also, with Mr. Hoover's complicity, and by act of June 10, 1930, have now a new bureaucratic bourgeoning in the field of agricultural perishable products. The inter-state traders in such products must now be licensed by the Department of Agriculture. They must be careful not to provoke the Secretary of Agriculture by oppressive practices into rescinding their licenses. They must meditate upon a

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higher and nobler individualism than that of unrestrained free will.

So must the operators of inter-state buses. Mr. Hoover says so. "The bus regulation measure," he remarked to the Congress last year, "should be completed."

He similarly—but much more importantly—has asked the Congress to impose more regulation upon the operators of electric power companies. There has been irony in the reception of that request.

Almost two years ago Mr. Hoover said to the Congress:

"It is desirable that the authority of the Federal Power Commission should be extended to certain phases of power regulation." . . .

The invitation thus conveyed by the President to the Congress was at any rate an opening. Through it a progressive Senate could have rushed to drive a larger coach, hauled by more and bigger horses, than the President perhaps wished. The irony is that the Senate has been so preoccupied with battling the power interests at Muscle Shoals that it has had virtually no strength left with which to battle them through competent and effective federal regulation of them in all their inter-state activities and aspects throughout the country. The Senate bill for the quelling of power companies federally in the whole inter-state arena is still in the chrysalis stage. The President is able on this point to regard himself—if he so chooses—as a pioneering collectivistic regulator far in the van of progressive actual action.

We then approach, after federal regulation, federal ownership and operation.

The federal departments manufacturing commodities for their own use or for the use of other departments continue to manufacture them.

The Department of Commerce, for instance, through its Bureau of Mines, continues to manufacture helium for the Navy Department. In the course of the last twenty-four months the President's Budget Bureau has secured some $400,000 from the Congress for enlarging the helium plants whereby the Bureau of Mines has virtually extinguished the commercial future of the country's private helium industry. Senator Norris could not do much more.

On western waterways, deepened to navigability by federal finance, the federally owned and operated tugs and barges of the War Department's Inland Waterways Corporation are still engaged, as the Secretary of War puts it, "in demonstrating that the development of our waterways is a sound business undertaking that promises cheaper freight rates for the people whose taxes have paid for their improvement."

At Muscle Shoals Mr. Hoover has fought the proponents of public operation with results which constitute a stand-still. At Boulder Dam he has helped to accomplish results which constitute motion—and which constitute also an acceptance of much public participation in the project.

The power plant at Boulder Dam—now Hoover Dam—will be operated jointly by a local private enterprise and a local public authority. The power produced will go in part to the local private enterprise but in much larger part to local public authorities in various guises. Back of them the original financing of the whole Hoover Dam effort will have been achieved—not in times of war, as in the instance of Muscle Shoals, but in times of peace!—by a Federal Government beneficently interested in cheap water and cheap power for its children of the Far Southwest.

If this mixed outcome gives little satisfaction to our fiercer "forward-lookers," it gives less to our languishing laudators of times gone by.

I now arrive, however, at a development which far transcends the meager limits which must be assigned in this country at this time to public ownership and operation as a political prospect. I allude to certain prospective diminutions of individualistic competition between privately owned and operated business units.

What has been Mr. Hoover's attitude in relation to this problem? It has not been toward the multiplying of competitive massacres. It has been toward the mitigating of them.

Mr. Hoover has not urged more railroad units and more struggle between them for the partition of revenue. He has urged railroad consolidations.

He has not urged more banks. He has urged congressional consideration of more bank branches and more bank chains—under, of course, proper public surveillance.

He has given a sanction of non-interference to the Chadbourne sugar scheme. That scheme involves restraints upon sugar exports by many countries. It involves restraints upon sugar plantings as well as upon sugar exports by Cuba, our international sugar ward. It involves extensive financial operations by the Cuban governmental treasury, toward which we have a frequently proclaimed solemn international responsibility. The Chadbourne sugar scheme, as a total, is undoubtedly all time's farthest reach toward a governmentally sustained international capitalistic collectivism. It draws from the Hoover Administration a full tacit consent.

In the meantime, within our national confines, our Federal Farm Board, advocated and initiated by Mr. Hoover, has flown a flag not altogether dissimilar to Mr. Chadbourne's.

I realize that some farmers are hostile to the Federal Farm Board because it manifestly cannot cure the whole world of a worldwide instant depression of prices. They are against the Board for what it is unable to do. I am more impressed by the gentlemen who are against the Board for what it does do.

It finances collective groups of farmers—called cooperatives—to get business which otherwise would go to individualistic private traders. These traders in Chicago have formed a militant society to exterminate the Federal Farm Board. In Philadelphia their grief has aroused Senator David A. Reed to declare that in the next session of the Congress he will move to wipe the Board off the statute-books.

I cannot believe that a grief so profound is caused by a Board which is no menace to individualism as we have known it. The Board is in truth a devastating menace to that individualism in the agricultural products marketing industry. It embodies a principle which could in time pave the whole route from harvest-field to retail-store with cooperatives in place of individualistic competitive enterprises.

In the wake of the administrative energies of the Federal Farm Board we observe the statistical and moral energies of the Federal Oil Conservation Board.

Oil men of the West wish to curtail their disastrously

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excessive oil output by collective "allocation" and by collective "proration." They cannot do so without incurring a possible visitation from the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice represents individualistic law. The Federal Oil Conservation Board represents collectivistic economic equity. It proceeds to appoint a committee which proceeds to publish statistics "allocating" to each oil state its sensible quota of production. It proceeds of its own motion to advise the oil States to enter, among themselves, into an "inter-state compact" under which they may be able to restrict themselves to their "allocations" and to "prorate" those allocations among their individual producers.

In other words, the Federal Oil Conservation Board proposes to organize the oil production of the United States on a collectively controlled basis through the statistical and moral intervention of the Federal Government and through the coercive intervention of the oil-State local governments.

If Mr. Chadbourne could give his time to it, this oil project would appropriately crown his sugar project.

And now the Federal Timber Conservation Board is beginning to emulate the Federal Oil Conservation Board's adventures. It, too, has started to publish committee reports on expected consumption and on suitable output. It, too, has started to adumbrate the coming eclipse of economic soloists by economic orchestras.

Wholly consistently, Mr. Hoover has suggested to the Congress that in respect of the bituminous coal industry there should be a legislative pondering upon the question whether or not a strict complete retention of the statutes against co-operative control of output is now wise. Some operators have responded by suggesting that the Federal Government should supervise the co-operative control undertaken.

Those operators are clear-sighted. They know very well that governmental sanction to private co-operative control implies, as a corollary, governmental direct or indirect protection of the consumer.

Mr. Hoover, in his tacit or expressed patronage of all these steps toward a checking of ruthless and ruinous individualism in privately owned and operated industries, has been both a collectivist and, in ultimate inevitable outcome, a governmentalistic collectivist.

I have now spoken of Mr. Hoover's attitude toward federal subsidies, toward federal regulation, toward federal ownership and operation, toward federal assistance to co-operative endeavors in private business. Throughout he has exhibited a collectivistic tinge. Throughout, whenever any positive new move can be attributed to him, it has been toward the collectivistic end of the economic spectrum.

What I could willingly imagine now would be a Mr. Hoover stepping buoyantly to a microphone and saying:

"Fellow-countrymen:

"The depression has waked up a lot of people. I want to tell you that it can even wake up Presidents.

"I have been preaching a dogma—and breaching it. This has been very confusing to you. It has also been very confusing to me.

"I have now destroyed the plates of my book on American Individualism. I wish to announce that I am now an individualist in chief principle but a strong collectivist in supplementary practice.

"I perceive now that some considerable collectivism is needed in order to make a core of individualism survive and thrive. I not only perceive this, but I shall say it.

"Along with most of my critics I have been philosophizing the past and backing into the future. I thus have seemed often to be irresolute and inconsistent.

"I have advocated great subsidies to ship-constructors and have been frightened by smaller ones to crop-growers in drought regions.

"I have advocated federal financial assistance to local health units and have been scandalized by suggested federal financial assistance to local employment exchanges.

"I have gone farther than any of my predecessors in the White House toward advocating public works as alternatives to private pay-rolls in depressions but have hesitated to pursue that novelty to the gigantic scope required by the situation.

"I have been the very first President to cause the Federal Government to express a vigorous opinion in favor of the maintenance of private hourly and weekly wage-levels for the employed during depressions, but I have shied away from the parallel innovation of causing the Federal Government to exert a vigorous pressure toward the formation of private wage-insurance funds to be expended for the *un*employed during depressions.

"Exactly like the journalist who has implored me to make this speech, I have sinned greatly against a coherent acceptance of economic fate.

"My fault! My fault! My grievous fault!

"You never before saw a lapse by a President from the doctrine of presidential infallibility, but you see one now.

"I shall now cease to philosophize only the past and shall strive also to philosophize the future.

"Watch me, and you will be surprised to see how much better I shall go when I go into the future face forward."

So I imagine him broadcasting, and it takes almost as much imagination on my part as it would take audacity on his.

It all, in any case, is only a perhaps reprehensibly frivolous way of trying to express two concluding contentions:

One. Whether illustrated by reactionaries who are against unemployment insurance because they would rather see the unemployed man die exclaiming "I *die to preserve* individualism," or illustrated by radicals who are against chain stores because they think that there ought to be as many separate individual managements as there are stores in this whole country, our dominant thought in Washington is a brake upon our national progress instead of an engine of propulsion for it.

Two. We greatly need in our national public life a political philosopher who, without surrendering his hold upon the tenable advantages of individualism, can nevertheless specifically survey and comprehensively declare the points of desirable occupancy in the new American collectivist frontier.

I think that only such a philosopher could in 1932 strive for the Presidency against Mr. Hoover on terms that would make the contest anything more than a possible exchange of one President whom we charge with "lack of leadership" for another President whom we would then equally unconstructively but equally discontentedly charge all over again with "lack of leadership."

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Vanzetti and the Quest for Truth

By GARDNER JACKSON

IT may seem fantastic and, therefore, quite unconvincing to compare the words of Bartolomeo Vanzetti, executed as a murderer by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts just four years ago (August 23, 1927), and those of Herbert Hoover, President of the United States. Nevertheless, so striking is the contrast that the comparison is inevitable to anyone familiar with the utterances of both.

Vanzetti was writing from his prison cell in Charlestown Prison, Mass., after more than six years' incarceration. President Hoover was writing from the White House after a year and a half of occupancy. Vanzetti was writing to Alice Stone Blackwell of Boston whom he addressed as "Dear Comrade Blackwell." President Hoover was writing to President-emeritus W. O. Thompson of Ohio State University, whom he addressed as "My dear President Thompson."

President Hoover wrote (under date of Dec. 30, 1929): "You aptly penetrate the vital question of public action—the discovery and promulgation of truth. . . . We can and must . . . greatly increase the production of truth . . . the grave interest of 120,000,000 people is involved in government policies. . . . The truth is hard to discover; it must be distilled through the common judgment of skilled men and women from accurately and patiently collected facts and knowledge of forces before the extraction of the essence of wisdom. The materials themselves are hard to come by; it takes time and patience. . . . So you will know why . . . more and more temporary committees, commissions, conferences, researches—that they are not for executive action (for which they are anathema) but are one of the sound processes for the search, production, and distribution of truth."

Vanzetti, not yet even imagining an Advisory Committee headed by the President of Harvard University to investigate his and Sacco's predicament, wrote (under date of Nov. 12, 1926): "It is now customary to speak of objectiveness—as of a great thing. Relatively understood, it is a good thing, absolutely it is trash. A human being can perceive, understand, judge from and with his being and he can only be objective according to the very nature of his being, in respect to each and all the questions and problems of life. Nothing is worse than a false belief of self-goodness or greatness. It is that which permitted Nero to kill his mother without remorse. . . . The convinced of the most bad belief may wrong everything and everyone, convinced to be objective.

"Therefore, I will only try to be just and honest to each of my topics—this is the only possible and real objectiveness. Yet, if I will treat anything in a wrong erroneous way, by ignorance, I will be unjust and unhonest, che fatto, in spite of all my good will. The truth, then, is what matters. But in this regard, too, alas to one who is too sure of possessing it, especially if more than relatively absolutely. . . ."

President Hoover from the White House was informing his friend that the attacks on his administration were merely in the nature of harassments against the crusade for truth. Vanzetti from his prison block was telling his gentle New England spinster comrade (unknown to him virtually except by correspondence) that he could only try to be honest, never claiming infallibility for himself or his friends.

The contrast is surely not far-fetched—the long-time prisoner approaching electrocution with searchings of his mind and conscience for the facts, and the President of the United States using the phrase, "hair shirt," in his letter to Dr. Thompson as a protest against the bringing of "objectiveness" to bear upon his own administration.

So, we cannot escape considering the works of the President's commissions in the digging for truth. And, naturally, the first of President Hoover's commissions to command attention is the Wickersham Commission. How fared that body of America's best minds in the definitions provided by Vanzetti and President Hoover?

As a newspaper man in Washington of quite recent residence I must confess to deep disgust at some aspects of the Wickersham Commission work. To consider the case of Sacco and Vanzetti alone, it would seem reasonable to expect that a gathering of minds such as made up the Wickersham body would go to the record of that seven-and-a-half-year case for evidence concerning the administration of justice in America. Yet all that appears in any of the reports is a veiled reference to it in the report on unfair prosecutions submitted by Professor Zechariah Chafee, Jr., of the Harvard Law School. For the rest, this country appears not to have had a world-troubling Sacco-Vanzetti case so far as the two years of study by the Commissioners and their experts show.

Not that any reference by the Wickersham Commission to the Sacco-Vanzetti case would help to pacify the souls of the two Italians, but simply that this finest group of minds was ostensibly seeking the truth of law administration in this country without regard to policy.

Granted that a number of the reports issued by the Wickersham Commission were of utter integrity—such, for example, as Reuben Oppenheimer's scholarly and devastating study of the United States deportation practices, or Dr. Miriam Van Waters's analysis of the treatment of juvenile delinquents in this country, or Dr. Frank Tannenbaum's account of prison conditions in America—the vital and terribly depressing fact is that this group of America's choicest minds was willing to sacrifice truth for policy in instances where policy was acute. Consider, in this connection, the suppression by the Commission of the 600-page report on the Mooney-Billings case turned in by Walter H. Pollak and Carl Stern to the Commission sub-committee on legal lawlessness headed by Judge William S. Kenyon. Here was the arduous work of experts hired by the Commission and paid for out of the taxpayers's pocketbooks simply pigeonholed because the assembly of fact-seeking minds knew what a controversial issue the case was and what hob a report on it would play. The argument that the Commission had no authority to make recommendations in any given case was

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entirely beside the point—nobody even suggested that the Commission should recommend disposition of that case. All that was in order, and all that Mr. Pollak and Mr. Stern did, was to study the record of the Mooney-Billings case for evidence of legal lawlessness. That they found plenty is indicated by the 600-page report they made (apparently for oblivion).

No purpose can be served by going on with instances relating to the Wickersham Commission (whose chief sin, as one member, Monte Lemann of New Orleans, has been at pains to point out, was absence of genuine research—search for facts at first hand).

The purpose may be helped by referring briefly to other committees and commissions whose members have discovered that the dispassionate (so far as one can be dispassionate, as Vanzetti says) search and turning up of facts is not what the present administration really wants—nor any other administration within recent years. The President's Emergency Employment Committee is a classic example to all newspaper men in Washington. Hardly a single recommendation made by the aggregation of experts connected with that committee was acted upon favorably by the White House. Yet not one of that committee objected publicly.

The sum and substance of my contrast between Vanzetti in his prison cell and President Hoover in the White House is that Vanzetti was genuinely eager to discover truth and that the execution of him and Sacco was caused by the very attitude which dominates the governmental commissions at crucial points.

There is no question at all, judging by correspondence I have had with various members of various commissions, that the crucial issues are recognized by these members. The issue turns on the "guts" of these commissioners and their experts. The showing thus far in the Hoover Administration is that a pitifully small number of the summoned seekers for facts have the courage to announce what they find and stick by it. As long as this country has a collection of its best minds soft-pedalling controversial and unpleasant facts in its presumed honest facing of and search for facts, so long will there be Sacco-Vanzetti and Mooney-Billings cases.

Briand the Unaccountable

By ROBERT DELL

ONE evening nearly a quarter of a century ago, when Clemenceau was Prime Minister for the first time, he was chatting in his private room at the Ministry of the Interior with two or three of his colleagues in the Cabinet, and the conversation turned on two absent Ministers, Barthou and Briand. Clemenceau pronounced himself as follows: "The difference between Barthou and Briand, you see, is this: Barthou has principles—successive principles—and Briand has none at all."

At first sight this may seem a rather surprising judgment, for Briand has had more "successive principles" than Barthou, who has always been a man of the Center, inclining, like all men of the Center, now to the Right, now to the Left, according to circumstances. Briand, on the other hand, has almost boxed the political compass twice over. Starting from the extreme Left as a revolutionary Socialist, he began, soon after his first election to Parliament, moving gradually away from that position, and in less than ten years had become the hope of the Conservatives. In 1900 he was preaching the revolutionary general strike; in 1910 he was suppressing a railway strike by methods of doubtful legality. The workmen of St. Etienne sent him to Parliament in 1902 as an apostle of the class war; ten years later he had become the apostle of the "policy of appeasement," that is, in fact, of the formation of a great Center party excluding the Socialists on one side and the Extreme Right on the other—a fore-runner of Poincaré's "National Block." The attempt failed—no doubt it was premature—but Briand completed the work that Clemenceau had begun of destroying the coalition of the Left and disintegrating the Radical party, which has not fully recovered to this day. He brought to perfection the system of governing by shifting majorities, composed now of one combination of parliamentary groups, now of another.

In 1913 the man who a dozen years before had advocated the general strike in the event of a war introduced the Three-year Service Bill; he boasted of the fact recently in the Chamber. In February, 1917, Briand signed a secret treaty with Russia, without the knowledge of the other Allied Governments, by which France and Russia undertook to support each other's requirements at the Peace Conference whenever it should be held; notably Russia pledged herself to support the permanent separation of the Rhineland from Germany, and France pledged herself to hand over the whole of Poland to the Czar, and to regard the Polish question as one of Russian internal politics. A few months later Briand was trying to make peace by negotiation—it is true that the Russian revolution had occurred in the interval. Since the end of the war he has been moving back towards the Left, and, had circumstances been propitious, he might well have ended where he began—in the Socialist party. But circumstances have compelled him, if he wished to stay in office, to balance himself skilfully on a tight-rope and once more to govern with shifting majorities. Where he is now it would be difficult to say; and it is doubtful whether he knows himself.

Here, one would say, are "successive principles," if you like. Yet Clemenceau, who had not a little psychological insight, was right. It is not a case of successive principles, but of successive tendencies, or rather of conflicting tendencies which successively get the upper hand. Temperamentally, Briand is on the Left. He would gladly have stayed in the Socialist party had the Socialist party allowed him to remain in it and at the same time be a member of an anti-Socialist Cabinet. He would probably have preferred always to govern with a majority of the Left, but it is not his fault that there is not always a majority of the Left to govern with. The important thing is that he should govern, not necessarily out of mere vulgar office-seeking, but rather because he believes it to be in the nature of things.

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In some respects Briand resembles Lloyd George—are they not both Bretons?—but there are great differences between them. Both have more perception and understanding than knowledge. Clemenceau's well-known saying is profoundly true: "Poincaré knows everything and understands nothing; Briand knows nothing and understands everything." But Lloyd George knows how to get information and how to use it; Briand does not take the trouble to get it. He leaves other people to do his work. One of his private secretaries said to me years ago: "It is difficult to get Briand to sign a letter, and quite impossible to get him to read one before he signs it." It is doubtful whether Briand could ever have been Foreign Minister had he not always had Philippe Berthelot behind him. And it has more than once been revealed that he left so much in Berthelot's hands that the latter even took action committing the French Government without consulting his nominal chief. That is not at all like Lloyd George. Lloyd George and Briand are both brilliant orators, but Briand is the greater artist of the two. A famous French actor, after listening to one of Briand's speeches in the Chamber, said: "He has filled me with despair. I can't touch him."

But Briand gives the impression that he does not prepare his speeches. One can often see when he is speaking that he is talking to fill up the time while he is thinking what to say next. And he often says things that he certainly would not say had he reflected. A few months ago he told an astonished Chamber that all alliances were incompatible with the Covenant of the League of Nations. The sentence did not appear in the report of his speech in the "Journal Officiel." He is too much influenced by the circumstances of the moment and the atmosphere in which he speaks. In the Senate on March 28, the enthusiastic reception given to a speech attacking his policy led him to take what was undoubtedly a much stronger line about the Austro-German customs union proposal than he had intended to take, to talk in a threatening manner of the military strength of France, and in effect to promise to stop the proposed customs union at any cost.

Briand is a man of brilliant intelligence. But is he really a statesman? He seems to me to live politically from hand to mouth. A statesman may be unprincipled, but he must have political principles of some sort, clear conceptions of what he is aiming at, and long views. Briand throws off brilliant suggestions, but he rarely seems able to work them out. When at Geneva in 1929, he threw out the suggestion of "European Union," it is doubtful whether he had any clear conception of what it involved, and it is certain that it has landed him in an impossible position. When he, or somebody else, had to put his idea in a concrete form, it became, as Paul-Boncour remarked with pleasure and Léon Blum with regret, little more that the Protocol of 1924 refurbished and restricted to Europe. Its only practical result up to now has been the Austro-German proposal, and the secret of Briand's extreme annoyance at that proposal is that he understands this. He is far too intelligent not to recognize that Germany and Austria have stolen his thunder, and are trying to take the first step towards the economic unity that he tried to avoid because he knows that France would be the last country in Europe to accept it.

Briand has had mishaps of this sort before. He calls himself the author of Locarno, but the authors of the Locarno Treaty were Lord D'Abernon in the first place and Stresemann in the second; and Briand agreed to it only after months of resistance. Briand's friends claim for him part authorship at least of the Kellogg Pact, yet what he proposed was a quasi-alliance between France and the United States, and Kellogg's counter-proposal was a blow that filled Briand and the Quai d'Orsay with consternation. It was American diplomacy that scored on that occasion. Statesmen, if they can help it, do not let themselves in for discomfitures of this sort.

Briand's great mistake during the last five years has been the belief that he is indispensable, which has made him cling to office at all costs. He has been led into that mistake to a great extent by one of his chief failings, that of overrating his power of getting what he wants by "wangling." Undoubtedly he has a remarkable capacity for "wangling" things out of unwilling people; but it is not unlimited. When he was leaving Geneva in September, 1926, after the meeting with Stresemann at Thoiry, somebody on the railway platform said to him, "Poincaré has his eye on you." "Yes," replied Briand, "as the lion has his eye on his tamer." Alas! In a few weeks the tamer was inside the lion. Briand should have resigned when his colleagues in the Poincaré Cabinet turned down the arrangements that he had made with Stresemann at Thoiry. He would have been violently attacked in France and would have been in the shade for some time, but soon or late he would have returned to office with real power. He has gone on making the same mistake by accepting office in successive Nationalist and Conservative Governments in which he has been a sort of hostage. He has had to adapt his policy to that of his colleagues and of the Government majority in the Chamber, and has been used as a screen to conceal from the world the real character and aims of French foreign policy.

It was because he had got himself into an impossible position that he tried to escape from the Quai d'Orsay to the Elysée. How he and his friends could have been so confident as they were that Briand would be elected President of the Republic passes my understanding. My opinion from the first, which I expressed in the *Manchester Guardian*, was that his election was at least very uncertain. Apart from the fact that the electors of the National Assembly always prefer—with some reason—a dignified nonentity to a prominent politician, it seemed to me likely that in a secret ballot Briand would get the votes of no senators and very few deputies outside the Opposition of the Left, whose candidate he really was. It is probable that the large majority of his own colleagues in the Government voted for Doumer, who was bound, as President of the Senate, to poll the great majority of the senators. Briand has now made the crowning mistake, in spite of the advice of most of his best friends, of withdrawing the resignation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which he handed in after his defeat in the presidential election. Had he maintained it, he could have become the leader of the Left, and might well have returned to power with a large majority in the Chamber after the general election next April. As it is, he is the prisoner of the Center and the Right, and will be kept in check more than ever. Throughout his political career he has taken the line of least resistance and acted on the maxim *"reculer pour mieux sauter,"* often with unsatisfactory results. It may be that this time he will find that the mistake is irreparable.

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Well, I Quit My Job at the Dam

By VICTOR CASTLE

[*The following letter was written by a worker at Boulder Dam to Fred H. Moore, a Los Angeles attorney.*]

Las Vegas, Nevada, August 8.

WELL, the first thing the four of us did when we pulled in to Las Vegas was to find Mr. Wells, the attorney representing the I. W. W. We learned from him that all of the vagrancy cases against them had been dismissed. He told us he had wired you to that effect. Wells was very much amused over the fact that the I. W. W. boys had been charged with vagrancy notwithstanding that they actually had more money on their persons than most of the people coming into Las Vegas. Of course you and I know that the real reason they were arrested was that their attempt to organize the workers was a thorn in the flesh of the "Six Companies." . . .

The life of Las Vegas all centers around the court-house park, the little stretch of green grass in front of the depot, and the main street, where one finds a solid lineup of gambling houses and drinking joints. Then, of course, there is the unforgettable "skidway," where, for approximately a square block, the flotsam and jetsam are herded together for the purpose of satisfying the sex appetites of the men who are building the Hoover Dam. Many a young worker is going to remember the Hoover Dam, not as a triumph of engineering skill, but as the place where he contracted a venereal disease. Prices here are relatively low, including sex satisfaction. While sitting at a restaurant table we were approached by a girl who advised us that at the "Blue Heaven" and "Ye Bull Pen Inn" and a number of other places, a more choice quality of feminine companionship could be found, younger I suppose, but at a correspondingly higher price. We did not avail ourselves of this privilege. Curiosity did take us down the "skidway" and there women and girls of all kinds and ages vied with each other to attract attention.

There are just two endurable spots in town—the court house lawn, and the depot lawn. The City Fathers of Las Vegas are entitled to at least one vote of thanks, for they never turn the water off, and so the grass is constantly sprinkled. Men, women, and children sleep on the lawn at all hours of day and night, and sometimes an exhausted sleeper gets a good soaking. If he is not particular about his wardrobe he welcomes the water as a relief from the heat. Here, in these parks, you can find workers from every section of the United States—lured across the desert by the hope of work. The temperature reached its peak of 120 in the shade around 2.30 p.m. Our first night we slept on the lawn, with hundreds of others, at the court-house. I say slept out of courtesy; as a fact it was so hot all night we woke up the next morning more exhausted than we were the night before.

The second day the four of us hit the highway again in our car and headed for the dam site. First we drove to Boulder City, which is thirty-two miles from Las Vegas. This city is being built and will be under the immediate control of the "Six Companies"; it will be the construction center for all the work. Judging superficially, the quarters that will be occupied by the workers, when houses under construction are completed, will not be bad. These buildings reminded me of the barracks which were built at the cantonments. However, it is too early to judge of these places, and at best it will be many months before Boulder City will or can be occupied.

From Boulder City we drove on some four or five miles to Williamsville, better known locally as "Rag City." On a large rock which we passed as we neared the entrance to this section some honest person had painted "HELL HOLE." This is the refuge of men with families who have come seeking employment. There is not a green thing in sight. Here are probably some three to four hundred families living in tents rigged up out of every known kind of wood, rag, and tin from cans. These "homes" are scattered around on bare hillsides, where the only vegetation is dwarfed specimens of cactus and mesquite. All water has to be hauled in from the outside. Las Vegas water is sold at fifteen cents for two gallons, or five gallons for a quarter. Local enterprise has dug a hole in the sand something like a block from the river, where the Colorado (which is Spanish for red, and the river is well-named) River waters seep through. Here is where those who don't (and most of them can't) buy Las Vegas water dip their supply from. The water is almost the color and texture of rich cocoa. "Rag City" boasts no sanitary facilities, other than two old-fashioned out-houses which are patronized by everybody.

We next went to one of the Lewis Construction Camps, known as "Camp B." There I got a job, working in the dining room as a waiter. I went to work about 12.30 p.m. and worked until 7.30 p.m. The following morning I worked from 5.30 a.m. until 2 p.m. For this I got $2 besides my meals, being allowed fifty cents per meal. Then I quit. I could have got this job for a month at $60 a month with board and room. The board is good. The "room" consists of a cot with filthy blankets placed in a tent with three other cots. The tent is utterly unprotected by any shade, mercilessly exposed to the sun and without any double roof. I tried to sleep between 7.30, when I quit, and 5.30 when I went to work again, but it was simply impossible—the tent was unbearable. I preferred the outdoors and found a lumber pile where I stretched out. I did not sleep, I dozed, for I was tired but with a temperature which never dropped below 130 during the night sleep was out of the question. By morning I felt burned to a crisp.

As I understand the situation, Anderson Brothers have a contract for the feeding and housing of men with the "Six Companies." They also run the commissary. The men are furnished script books with which they can buy supplies, with the profit going to the Anderson Brothers.

In the mess hall where I worked, four waiters served 350 men. We no sooner got the tables cleared and the set-up out again when another gang of workers came along. We had to hustle every minute. There can be no legitimate

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complaint about the food, either as to quality or quantity, and I would say that it was well chosen to suit climatic conditions. But the men, when they came in from the job, were so exhausted from the heat it was impossible for them to eat a substantial meal. Possibly the best indication I can give of the temperature is found in the fact that practically no one works in anything other than a pair of trousers and shoes. It was quite a sight to see a hundred or more men trying to eat, all stripped to their waists, with rivulets of sweat running down their faces and backs. While I was there two men were brought in who had passed out completely. One, a commissary clerk, collapsed in his tent after he finished his work and had convulsions. There was no doctor. Buckets of ice water were thrown on him. This was the only medical service he got, and we, the workers, gave it to him. He was taken into town later in a machine owned by a worker; we don't know whether he lived or not. From his condition I doubt it. The other man went under on the job. We threw more ice water on him. It was the only thing we knew to do, and the only thing we could do without medical advice or aid.

I heard all sorts of stories about men being blown up by premature explosions at the tunnel. The responsibility for this is variously laid to the faulty powder and improper mining methods. I am told that down at the dam site there is no medical or surgical help available, no hospital facilities, no first-aid equipment, no stretchers, no ambulances, nothing to protect the lives of workers.

So I quit. I would rather mootch on the main stem than work in a temperature around 140 for $2 a day, and my meals, and then have to pay $1.50 a month for insurance—particularly when the insurance companies specifically exempt the greatest element of danger, heat prostration.

I am willing to concede that the work is just getting under way. But the fact is that the United States government is permitting the "Six Companies" to "get away with murder" on a grand scale. So anything that you, or anyone else, can do to bring these facts to the attention of the country at large, ought to be done. The people of Las Vegas, and the workers individually, are powerless to meet the organized greed of the "Six Companies" which has the tacit endorsement or acquiescence of the Federal Government.

In the Driftway

ONE of the impressive arguments of the last generation, when people wanted to prove the bounteous providence of nature, was the travel record made by a drop of water—the Drifter believes it was always called, affectionately, a little drop of water. Starting far off in the Indian Ocean, but lifted by the sun's fond rays into the cerulean sky, the little drop of water was carried, or not infrequently wafted, on the wings of the gentle winds to the slopes of the soaring Andes, where, cooled by the dark woodlands that stretched their eager arms aloft, it was precipitated as rain. Something of a come-down, to be sure; but That is Life. And anyway, after lingering joyously in a mountain lake—probably a clear mountain lake—the little drop roved adventurously down through valleys and across plains, finding at last a welcome from its trillions of companions in the vast Pacific. Still a long way from home; but there is no need to trace this odyssey more, save to concede that on the universal rounds there was every opportunity to be frozen into an iceberg, stand poised for a second on the tip of a geyser, or dilute a demi-tasse.

* * * * *

YET the cold truth is that nature continues to be somewhat less bounteous than a reasonable man might desire; and even with water it can be niggardly with a certain grim humor. Those lines of the "Ancient Mariner," "Water, water everywhere, nor any drop to drink," possess a poignancy dimmed only by enforced repetition in a schooling that made even death at sea by thirst seem often a mild fate. And not so long ago the Drifter came upon an item in the foreign press that made him drop the paper—a little drop, at least—and stare off over the wilderness of the imagination. "The Norwegian steamer Vigdis left Cardiff on Saturday, with a cargo of 835,200 gallons of Cardiff drinking water for supplying the twenty vessels engaged in whaling in the Antarctic. This is the largest quantity of fresh water ever shipped from Cardiff, and it is to be carried about 7,000 miles." Where, oh where are the film solons of Hollywood? Pursuing their unromantic piffle, when these things be? The Drifter hoped there was no storm off the Vigdis's bows. He turned to the daily reports of muddle and mess with a sigh, yet somehow with a lift of spirit. While men are able to carry water round the world in ships, and think no more of it than a few lines on page twenty-three, the human race has not been scuttled.

THE DRIFTER

Contributors to This Issue

HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON is the distinguished author, satirist and cartoonist.

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ROBERT DELL has for many years been a contributor to *The Nation*, the *Manchester Guardian* and other periodicals on conditions in France.

VIRGINIA MOORE is the author of a book of poems, "Sweet Water and Bitter."

CARLETON BEALS, author of "The Mexican Maze," is at present in Mexico where he is collecting material for a biography of Porfirio Diaz.

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HAROLD WARD has written articles on scientific subjects for various periodicals.

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Books

Oh More Than Cruel Love

By VIRGINIA MOORE

Oh more than cruel love do studious books,
Talk, laughter, silence, work done swift and fair,
Plain food, long sleep, sharp drafts of living air,
Unbodied music and the bodied looks
From friend to friend, a flock of shadowy rooks
Soaring at night like hopes upflying there
Compose the mind, out of the bosom tear
Regrets thrust inward, huge and pitiless hooks.

Yet say I calmly on a night like this
Without a moon or even a poor star,
Or nights when moon and many planets are:
Love with its promise, true or false, of bliss,
Love that escapes or falls to ash like fire
Is all that I lack wholly or desire.

Mexico and Middletown

Mexico: A Study of Two Americas. By Stuart Chase, in collaboration with Marian Tyler. The Macmillan Company. $3.

STUART CHASE learned more about Mexico in five months than most members of the resident American colony learn in thirty years. He traveled more widely, he studied more deeply, he met more varied groups of Mexicans; in short, he learned more about Mexican life and customs, about Mexican art, business, and politics than the conventional golf-club swingers at the Churubusco Country Club, who sit over tea and talk about bridge, servants, and the dirty "Yellow-bellies," will ever know. Not only that, but Chase came with a well-filled mind, an enthusiasm for observing the most out-of-the-way details, with the approach of a trained economist, and with vision devoid of customary "American" prejudices. As a result he has written a fine and generous book about Mexico. Chase, himself, gives the clue to why he has the edge on the average American resident, whose closer and more permanent contacts should make it possible for him to know Mexico much better: Mexico's maize civilization is not primarily an acquisitive civilization, but one based upon leisure, creative work with the hands, religious festivals, and many other activities in which the element of profit does not enter. Most American residents are highly developed specimens of our own acquisitive civilization, who regard any individual or any nation not primarily dedicated to money-making as suffering from paranoia. In his closing chapter Chase undertakes to give advice to Mexico, to the American colony, and to Middletown, a task somewhat presumptious, were it not that he speaks with so much wisdom and fairness. For the American colony, he has three words: "Díaz is dead." Chase is mistaken. For the American colony Díaz will never be dead, because he represents the masterly culmination of four centuries of acquisitive conquest. But Chase's words reveal why he came to know Mexico so well in five months.

I wish that Chase might have come to Mexico before Mr. Morrow made it popular, that he might have been here during the years of idealism and experimentation, instead of now, when the revolution he so much admires is dying, is practically dead; before Plutarco Elías Calles, whom Chase lauds so much, had turned into an incompetent banker, a manufacturer, and a wealthy *hacendado;* before the so-called revolution had been shaped into a machine to enrich its political survivors and to crush all independent popular expression. Chase arrived in a twilight period and has not quite recognized the fact. Not that he does not see the handwriting on the wall; but in political matters his book is not quite realistic.

Yet he shows such sympathetic understanding of Indian values that he is never far from a true comprehension of all that is basically Mexican. His sentences leap up and down through history and back and forth across nations, opening up vistas that few other modern writers would be equipped to give. Not, perhaps, that he has contributed very much that is new to our knowledge of Mexico, but he has seized upon what is significant and has illuminated it by comparison and by subjection to his own philosophy of life. He has oversimplified pre-conquest history and has stated rather dogmatically his ideas on the structure of the Aztec state concerning points which are still open to controversy. And for a short summary of the Conquest, I find Anita Brenner's chapter in "Idols Behind Altars" more brilliant and more accurate.

Mr. Robert Redfield's excellent, intensive scientific study of Tepoztlán fortunately has formed the basis for most of Chase's conclusions about the Indian. To Redfield's careful work, Chase has added supplementary observations from other towns and has given the whole significance for us by comparison with Middletown. I wish that he had also correlated for us some of the reactions of the two representative populations with regard to such manifestations as patriotism, sex, marriage, and death.

Chase does not sentimentalize the Indian or his way of life, though he is skilful in picking out what is sane and beautiful in his existence. Chase himself admits that he could not live very long in Tepoztlán, and thus does not expose himself to the criticism of a certain Mexican politician in the educational department, who made a speech at the University of California, eulogizing the Indian and declaring that he himself would prefer to wear leather-thong *guarachas*—and then went out and bought a Locomobile in which to visit the schools of the State. Tepoztlán happens to be one of the happiest native villages in Mexico. Chase does not recognize enough, I fear, that the Mexican fiestas and playtime are rooted in a deep and ignorant fanaticism and contribute to the Indian's enslavement to the Spanish-Aztec church; that they are, in part, the reflex to elementary hunger and lack of other forms of organized play.

Not all villages are so happy. Recently, on a month's horseback trip through the Mixtecan Indian region of Guerrero and Oaxaca, I discovered an abject poverty startling even for Mexico. The maximum wage, except for a few more fortunate citizens, is seven cents a day; which means that even though corn may be grown in addition for tortillas, the people are mostly in dirty rags, that small-pox and fatal measles are endemic, that infant mortality is incredibly high, and that during certain months of the year in some villages it is impossible to get anything real to eat; the inhabitants live on roots and berries. The mail carrier from Tlapa to Ometepec recently died of starvation on the road. Under such conditions of life there can be no individual stamina, no illumination of the spirit, and the Indian turns to chronic drunkenness (making his own *mescal*) and to Church festivities for temporary escape. In other words, it is fatal to generalize about conditions of life in a country so startlingly varied as is Mexico. In the broader sense, of course, Chase has seen the problem clearly: "We are not quarreling with the machine as such, nor are we senti-

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mentally satisfied with machineless men. Between . . . and bolting industrialism raw as Middletown has bolted it, they had best hold hard to their basic pattern."

Nor can I quite agree with Chase's dictum that Mexico has been declining for four hundred years, and that in 1917, with the promulgation of the Querétaro constitution, Mexico was suddenly reborn, even if it is the status of the Indian which is in point; any more than I would admit that England was necessarily declining under Roman, Danish and Norman rule. Certainly the Indian renascence had been at work in Mexico, even before the achievement of independence; and the reform movement of Juárez attempted most of the social changes inherent in the movement against Porfirio Díaz; indeed a full-blooded Indian arrived at the Presidency; and it cannot be said today that the Indian is closer to control of the state than he was then. Nor was Mexico necessarily declining even under the dictatorship of Díaz, whatever his repressions. To take that point of view is to simplify history to a social creed.

But quite apart from any minor modifications or reservations one might make, Chase's book is an admirable piece of popularizing, which cannot be recommended too highly as a most readable interpretation of Mexico, which places its emphasis, not upon the finances, the industries, the methods of exploiting Mexico's wealth, but upon the Mexican people, upon the basic Indian population, how it lives and works and plays, its aspirations, its struggles, its defeats and victories. Every reader, as he follows along these magic bypaths, will recognize, especially in this hour of depression, that we, in our feverish industrialism, have lost many of the most valuable and richest secrets life holds. This is a warm human book.

CARLETON BEALS

Our Royal Court

Washington Merry-Go-Round. Anonymous. Horace Liveright. $3.

The Mirrors of 1932. Anonymous. Brewer, Warren and Putnam. $2.50.

WE Americans at bottom are a nation of royalists. True, we do not want a king to rule us, and we profess to believe, sincerely I think, in at least the principles of democratic government. But we sorely miss the pageantry, the tinsel and trumpets, and all the other dazzling but inconsequential elegances one ordinarily identifies with royalty. We the people are sovereign, but some primitive appetite within us craves a tangible symbol of our sovereignty, of our collective egoism. Though we eschew kings, we must have a visible king-head. And so we proceed to deify the one individual among us who most nearly personifies our national sovereignty; we tenderly, though perhaps unconsciously, place a halo over the President of the United States. He is our king. We read into his character many qualities that are not there; we weave legends about him, and concoct myths to sustain us in our moments of doubt. When we rebel against this monarch we do not depose him, nor do we seek to remove the conditions which created him; we merely change his name.

But a king must have a royal court. In a republic such as ours there is no hereditary nobility to draw upon; we must do the best we can with the democratic material that lies most conveniently at hand. Hence our royal court consists, and must consist, of the job-holders and social hangers-on who inhabit the city of Washington. Not all of us can live within bowing and scraping distance of the White House, but our politically elite, and a few other socially important personages, do reside within that charmed area. And they are forever making the most of their good fortune. That their performance is often petty and tawdry, when not actually shot through with sham and cheap posturing, is no fault of these royal actors. It is the fault of a democracy that somehow cannot make noble lords and ladies out of otherwise successful politicians and their socially ambitious wives.

But the performance that goes on daily in Washington is by no means a total loss. For those who can appreciate good entertainment it affords the greatest, most gorgeous show on earth. And here, between the covers of "Washington Merry-Go-Round," a half dozen young writers have got together in skilful fashion the intimate and revealing details that make up this amusing public circus. "Washington Merry-Go-Round" tells who the players are, why they have come, and where they have come from. It portrays (betrays, one might almost say) their petty social activities, their provincial worship of form and precedence, their social, diplomatic, and matrimonial wars (". . . as in all one-industry villages these feuds are waged so earnestly that before they are over they line up on one side or the other almost every one in town. . . ."), and their manner of playing politics. No one who is anybody in Washington is neglected. They are all included from the President down. The professionally polite folk, led by "a half dozen middle-aged or aging ladies who absolutely dominate the social stage," are trotted out in an act entitled "Boiled Bosoms." The diplomats are paraded before us in all their "starched futility." The nice young men of the State Department come in with their pink peppermints—and papa's check-book. The inmates of "The Monkey House" on Capitol Hill, the Sons of the Wild Jackass, whose godfather is Senator George Moses, and the Vestal Virgins of the White House secretariat are all permitted to speak their brief but entertaining lines. But no royal court would be complete without its ponderous dukes and well-meaning barons who are forever doing something for the plain people. In "Washington Merry-Go-Round" we find these men given each a chapter to himself. They include such famous individuals as Egg Charley, the Vice-President; Wrong-Horse Harry, the Secretary of State; Little Nemo, the former Ambassador to Mexico, and Andrew Mellon, "the man who stayed too long." Last, but by no means the most insignificant, come the oft-neglected chroniclers of the court, the members of the corps of Washington correspondents. Here we are told, for example, that the New York *Times* "does not pay its Washington Bureau chief a large salary for his news gathering or news writing ability. What it wants and gets from Oulahan is 'front' . . . Oulahan is at his best as a host and as presiding officer at a banquet. . . . He is welcomed everywhere in Washington society. . . . He has a beautiful Georgetown home where he entertains as befits the socially prominent Washington correspondent of the New York *Times*. . . . His writing for the most part is confined to 'policy' stories. Policy stories are neatly turned editorials printed in the news columns, with a news atmosphere about them, but which are actually propaganda for someone or something that the paper favors."

I am only guessing when I say that at least six writers cooperated in the pleasant task of turning out "Washington Merry-Go-Round." It seems inconceivable to me that so many illuminating facts and so many delightful anecdotes could have been assembled by one person, or even by two or three persons. So replete is this book with carefully measured detail that it must be thoroughly read to be appreciated—and enjoyed. A simple review could never do it adequate justice. Not so much can be said of the "The Mirrors of 1932." This latter work is obviously the effort of a man—or woman—with a good memory, a batch of newspaper clippings, and a few afternoons to spare. It could have been written in a day or two; certainly it can be read, and forgotten, in less time than that. Yet it is not without its value. It examines with patience the character and qualifications of the present occupant of the executive

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palace in Washington, and finds him wanting. It does the same thing for nine supposed aspirants to his democratic throne (though for some curious reason not clearly brought out it treats Newton D. Baker with maternal gentleness). It is well to know something of these men of whom one or another may some day preside over our political affairs. But the anonymous author would have done better to engage in a bit of research before sitting down to write this book. Too many of its facts and anecdotes have grown thin with retelling.

MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

"Bad" Boys

Natural History of a Delinquent Career. By Clifford R. Shaw. University of Chicago Press. $3.

Fifty-five "Bad" Boys. By Samuel W. Hartwell. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.50.

"IN reviewing my life," begins the youthful hero of Mr. Shaw's study, "I now know and, in fact, always knew, without knowing how to avoid it, that it was a pointless, aimless, haphazard sort of existence. I failed miserably to understand life. The critical periods I bungled. The only emotions I felt were the emotions of the hurt."

This strikes one as a remarkable confession on the part of a proletarian little Rousseau condemned to long years in a penitentiary for "rape." They are the untouched words of a youngster still in his teens, and yet of how many men and women, white-collared, responsible, respectable, and unhappy, could they not also be said! In reading Mr. Shaw's "case history," and recalling the first volume in the series, "Jack Roller," one is made conscious of the vast tragedy of wasted human material which our triple system of family, school, and urban environment does so much to foster and increase.

The fifty-five young boys assembled by Dr. Hartwell of the Worcester Child Guidance Clinic had happily not reached the point when they could say that it was too late to understand their lives. Many of them came from supposedly good families, hardly any of them were delinquents in a proper sense of the word, most of them represent a valuable salvage from the standpoint of social relationships. If this be the case, it is primarily owing to the doctor himself, who, if he is as good as his book, must surely be a prince of the sociological church. A key to his technique may be discerned in these lines which contain a lesson for most workers among boys: "Occasionally I see a child I feel I understand so well that I can predict his behavior and responses in any new situation by thinking how I myself would act and feel under similar circumstances." A perusal of his most interesting and moving book will convince the reader that bad homes, often quite "upper middle class"—viciously stupid or cruel parents—are frequently quite as responsible for a youngster's downfall and waste as are the anti-social influences so plentiful outside. The element of loyalty should be absent in such an environment, and the astonishing fact is that on the part of the boy it is often present. Certain pages of direct discourse are so intensely interesting that it is a pity that the doctor does not permit more of his young visitors to tell their own stories in their own way. One of the most striking is that of "Charlie" who always "seemed to expect some definite thing to happen that would suddenly change him, make him feel differently, and solve all his problems." Surely that particular and touching form of infantilism is not limited to the young "Charlies" of this world. Both Catholics and certain psychoanalysts still believe in the miracle apparently, and perhaps it is just as well that they do, at least from the standpoint of therapeutic truth.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT

Three Pleasant Novels

The Grasshoppers Come. By David Garnett. Brewer, Warren and Putnam. $2.50.

Father Malachy's Miracle. By Bruce Marshall. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

Dwarf's Blood. By Edith Olivier. The Viking Press. $2.50.

THESE three English novels, although they stand out superior to the ruck of the season's fiction, belong on one of the pleasant little byways of literature which lead nowhere in particular. They do not evolve from personal experience, from an ideology, from a passion for revelation or even unique expression. Each is a tour de force founded upon a fresh idea—the kind of idea which tempts one to write a book.

Mr. Garnett needs no introduction. The present long short story, an adventure tale about a fallen aviator who feeds on locusts until rescued, attains to perfection within its limits. One does not need to say that Mr. Garnett's modern "Robinson Crusoe" is exquisitely written. In addition it has its moments of glamor and excitement. Just what the author means to say, if anything specific, is elusive; but the shadows of meanings that flit through the prose are what give the little volume its principal charm.

Mr. Marshall's amusing and good-tempered satire tells how a dumpy little Scottish monk, in the true Christian spirit of faith and humility, effects an extraordinary miracle, and describes the results of the miracle as it touched on the public and press, the sporting and scientific worlds, the leaders of the Protestant churches, and on Rome itself. All are convincingly and delightfully indicated in a story which does not attempt to push its conclusions or its satire beyond the point of freshness.

Miss Olivier's novel has a great theme; but in developing it she has not been altogether happy. The story concerns a man whose mother was a dwarf, who suffered all his boyhood and youth from that fact, who escapes and marries happily, only to have his second child born a dwarf. To heighten his agony, the mother appears and reveals herself to the wife. The novel might have developed into a study in ultimate human values. And by all means the father, rather than the dwarfed child and its mother, should have stood out, in his strength and weakness, the central tragic figure. But Miss Olivier has allowed her novel to develop into a plot story thickened with realism and sugared by sentiment.

The first two of these volumes are well worth the reading for intellectual entertainment. They are urbane, deft, and amusing. Although they may say nothing very new or very powerful, they say it very well.

FRED T. MARSH

Human Culture

The Evolution of Culture. By Julius Lippert. Translated and Edited by George Peter Murdock. The Macmillan Company. $5.

READERS of William Graham Sumner's "Folkways" will find themselves on familiar ground in this partial translation of a great nineteenth century anthropological classic. Julius Lippert, a Bohemian whose life covered the latter part of that century (he died as late as 1909), was one of those versatile, enormously industrious scientists who seem to take all knowledge for their province. Specializing more and more in the social sciences he produced a body of work which was finally incorporated in the two-volume "Evolution of Culture," first

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issued in German in 1887. This book has had a wide, though uneven influence in Europe, but in England and America has been comparatively unknown, although Sumner and Keller mentioned it no less than 400 times in their monumental "Science of Society." The small portion (less than half of the original) now translated, with a very able introduction and several appendices, by Professor Murdock, is an excellent handbook on anthropology for readers who are careful to make allowances for later and more accurate research. Lippert's "economic" point of view (one of the reasons for his great popularity in Russia) enabled him to treat of such difficult questions as race, marriage, sex, and religion with considerable insight and without the sentimentality so prevalent in the "English" school dominated by Westermarck; at many points he anticipates the attitude of so important an anthropologist as Robert Briffault —who, indeed, frankly acknowledges Lippert's wholesome influence. The amount of information gathered together is extraordinary; and the author's freedom from many of the errors of sociological thought easily compensates for what must often seem tiresome, obvious, and long-winded in his work. Professor Murdock has performed a valuable service in introducing this book to English readers.

HAROLD WARD

Problems of Population

The Principle of Population. By Francis Place. Edited by Norman E. Himes. Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.50.
Population Problems. By Warren S. Thompson. McGraw-Hill Book Company. $3.75.

THE dates of these two volumes practically bracket the period within which current population theory and practice developed. In "The Principle of Population," which originally appeared in 1822, is found the first recommendation of birth control in the English language. The author, a self-educated workingman and one of the most effectively aggressive radicals in nineteenth-century England, sought to show in this work that the truth in the Malthus-Godwin controversy lay in between the extreme views of these writers. Place rejected both Malthus's "moral restraint" and Godwin's optimism, and emphasized that birth control offered the only real solution of the population problem. Shortly after that he helped to organize the international birth-control movement by engineering the distribution of contraceptive handbills and by training a small but sturdy band of disciples. The present edition of Place's work is an exact reproduction of the original and contains a valuable introduction by Norman Himes, the leading authority on the English neo-Malthusian movement.

Dr. Thompson's work is the most comprehensive general text on population yet to appear. Only the history of the birth-control movement and the development and effects of modern sanitation and preventive medicine are neglected. Thompson's data show that, as a result of the full flowering of the contraceptive movement originally fostered by Place, population growth has nearly ended in many countries. Modern man must cope not with overpopulation but with problems arising out of cessation of population growth and possibly with depopulation. Thompson rejects the doctrine of an economic optimum population, finds urban life on the whole to be disadvantageous to man, and sees in the international distribution of population perhaps the leading political problem of the day. He rejects positive eugenics, stating that selection will not be dysgenic so long as multiplication of the unfit is bridled. None can read this valuable work and fail to note the close relation between population growth and distribution and socio-economic welfare.

JOSEPH J. SPENGLER

Books in Brief

God in the Straw Pen. By John Fort. Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.

Mr. Fort's new novel resolves itself into a powerfully written study of Methodist evangelism as waged in the up-country of Georgia circa 1830. The finest parts of the book are the series of prose portraits of the many types of hill country people, and the culminating revival scene. The conflict which makes the volume a novel lies between the two itinerant preachers who come to Ryall to conduct an extended revival—Isham Lowe, a noted hell-fire evangelist of "shoutin' Methodism," and young John Semple whom Lowe in the past had "saved," befriended, and inducted into the ministry. John's growing resentment against the older man leads to his throwing off forever the intolerable burden on his spirit of his religious work, but this is not accomplished until he has preached his last sermon—an extraordinary piece of oratory which Mr. Fort has rendered with remarkable understanding. This is an absorbing volume, if only as a poetic study in early Americana.

The Hex Woman. By Raube Walters. The Macaulay Company. $2.

This story is primarily a straight narrative retailing the lives of three women, triplets, who lived in the Pennsylvania Dutch country during the middle of the last century. None of them ever married, and they always lived together in the home which Aunt Susan had willed them. After years of poverty they take up the practice of witchcraft with great success and become prosperous hexers. But when Elizabeth, the leading spirit of the three, gives birth to a dead child, they lose their prestige. The novel does afford a little insight into the prevalence and workings of this mysterious superstition which, it would seem, is not even yet entirely dead in this region. But even in this respect it is far from satisfactory. The reader is not made to feel the reality of the faith and fear which the witchcraft inspires. And as a study of three women who grow into old age, of their pitiful attempts to find love, of their successes and despairs, of their periods of poverty and affluence, the novel, although sometimes moving, is not especially distinguished.

Torture Garden. By Octave Mirbeau. Translated from the French by Alvah C. Bessie. With a Foreword by James Huneker. Claude Kendall. $2.50.

Huneker in his Foreword (a few pages reprinted from "Bedouins") calls this novel, first published in France in 1899, when it created a sensation, "the most damnably cruel book in contemporary fiction." The characterization would seem to be justified. In its description of tortures it exhibits a mind tainted by the most frightful intellectual sadism. But to Mirbeau, rebel with a large streak of humanitarianism in his make-up, the Torture Garden was a symbol not only of all society but of nature itself.

Cold Blue Moon. By Howard Odum. Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

The author of "Rainbow Round My Shoulder" here evokes a picture of ante-bellum Southern life—ghosts, fox-hunting, racing, and the like—through the mind and language of his black Ulysses. The result is one of monotony and flatness; each ghost story receives the same emphasis, the manners related all have a blurred, sentimental, unauthentic Negro air about them. The language of black Ulysses has certain richness, but there might have been more rigorous selection from among the occasionally interesting stories and episodes.

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Cost of Government in the United States, 1928-1929. National Industrial Conference Board. $3.

This summarization of the income, expenditures, and indebtedness of the federal, State, and local governmental units is a continuation of the useful work previously done by the board in this field. While the national income, as estimated by the board, increased by 135 per cent from 1913 to 1928, public expenditures rose by more than 300 per cent to a gross total of $12,609,000,000. The federal debt, nearly all of it arising out of the war, was reduced from $22,711,000,000 in 1922 to $17,318,000,000 in 1928, but meanwhile State and local indebtedness increased from $7,154,000,000 to $12,609,000,000, so that the total public debt in the two years was almost exactly the same. Tax collections, which took 6.4 per cent of the national income in 1913, absorbed 11.5 per cent in 1928. The rapid growth of public expenditures, it is plain, is due not alone to the war, but to the expansion of government functions, education, for example, absorbing one-fifth of gross total expenditures in 1928, and highways, thanks largely to the automobile, one-seventh. The most cursory examination of the figures indicates the enormous importance of the wise collection and the efficient administration of public funds, and the National Industrial Conference Board is performing a service not only to business men, but to all responsible citizens, in this series of studies bringing together the outstanding facts of government income and expenditure.

Political Consequences of the Great War. By Ramsay Muir. Henry Holt and Company. $1.25.

Save for its disproportionate emphasis upon things British, this is as good a brief account as there is of the World War settlement and its political consequences. Professor Muir gives a critical summary of the peace terms, traces the development of democratic institutions in Great Britain and Germany and governmental ups and downs in other states, outlines the new relations between Europe and non-European countries, and discusses at some length the growth of internationalism and the changes within the British Empire and in the relative importance of Britain in the world. Like most British writers, he is hopeful about the League of Nations in spite of its failures and imperfections, but his criticism of parliamentary government does not encourage confidence in the inherent goodness or lasting qualities of that system. The economic and social changes of the period are not included in the survey.

France Under the Bourbon Restoration, 1814-1830. By Frederick B. Artz. Harvard University Press. $4.50.

There has been no very good treatment in English of the period of the Bourbon restoration, and Professor Artz's book is a useful attempt to supply what was needed. The period, while not brilliant, was important. There was no more liberal state on the continent than France after 1815, and the extended experience of self-government which it then enjoyed for the first time stood out in sharp contrast to the autocratic and oppressive political system of which Metternich was the embodiment. Socially, the period was characterized by the slow emergence of an industrial bourgeoisie from under the influence of the conservative small landed proprietors, with a consequent modification of the conditions of town life. Important movements of liberal Catholicism in religion, of eclecticism and positivism in philosophy, of socialism in economics and government, and of romanticism in literature, painting, and music are the more striking intellectual characteristics of the decade from 1820 to 1830. Of all these and other related matters Professor Artz gives an orderly and instructive account. The bibliography, for a book of moderate compass, is of imposing sweep.

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